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EXAMINER

HENRY, RODNEY M

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3622

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

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Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/748,118	Applicant(s) O'SHEA ET AL.	
	Examiner RODNEY HENRY	Art Unit 3622	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 October 2010.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-71 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8,13-21,23,25,34,37-65 and 69 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,9-12,22,24,26-33,35,36,66-68,70 and 71 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. The following is a non-final office action on the merits. Examiner acknowledges communications dated 10/8/2010. Claims 9, 27, 66, 67, and 68 were amended, claims 5, 8, 13-21, 23, 25, 34, and 37-65, and 69 were canceled. Therefore, claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9-12, 22, 24, 26-33, 35, 36, 66-68, and 70-73 are currently pending and are considered below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 27-31, 36, 66, and 67 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wodka et al. (US 2003/0171984), in view of Quinlan et. al. (US 20040215514), and further in view of Postrel (US 20050021400).

As per Claim 1:

Wodka et al. discloses an electronic rebate system configured for processing a manufacturer's rebate that is provided to a purchase of a product, said system comprising:

at least one electronic tag device associated with products made available for purchase, wherein each distinct product has at least one electronic tag physically connected thereto, and

wherein said electronic tag stores product-identification-information;
at least one electronic reading device configured to retrieve information from
said electronic tag ;

a first computer in communication with said electronic reading device configured
to retrieve said product-identification-information stored in the electronic tag associated
with a product being purchased by a customer at a point of sale and for which a
manufacturer's rebate applies solely as a result of purchase of the product (see
paragraphs [0017, 0021, 0035 discusses point of redemption (as in POS sale of a
product)], FIG. 5 and claims 9, and 11).

Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose said first computer further configured to
use said product-identification-information to acquire rebate-claim-information so that
the customer may receive the manufacturer's rebate;

said first computer further configured to communicate with a second computer
and to transfer to said second computer said rebate-claim-information and wherein said
transfer occurs substantially contemporaneous with the purchase; and

wherein said second computer is configured to process and validate a rebate
claim with said rebate-claim-information, and transfer rebate-claim-status information to
said first computer, said first computer configured to communicate said rebate-claim-
status information to the customer, wherein said rebate-claim-status information is one
of real-time information or near real-time information.

However, Quinlan et. al. discloses said first computer further configured to use said product-identification-information to acquire rebate-claim-information so that the customer may receive the manufacturer's rebate;

wherein said second computer is configured to process and validate a rebate claim with said rebate-claim-information, and transfer rebate-claim-status information to said first computer, said first computer configured to communicate said rebate-claim-status information to the customer (see FIG. 3 and paragraph [0016] via validate the rebate).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add rebate claim information, validation of rebates and rebate information transfer between computers to the system of Wodka et al. in order to effectively manage the incentive system.

Postrel further discloses

said first computer further configured to communicate with a second computer and to transfer to said second computer said rebate-claim-information and wherein said transfer occurs substantially contemporaneous with the purchase; a manufacturer's rebate applies solely as a result of purchase of the product; wherein said rebate-claim-status information is one of real-time information or near real-time information (see Postrel on real-time uploading and redemption of rebates via para. [0067] The smart card may be utilized in a real-time interactive transaction between a user and a merchant at the point of sale. When a user presents the smart card to the POS terminal at the merchant, the terminal accesses the memory and/or firmware of the smart card

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and can execute one or more of several types of real-time transactions. The POS terminal may upload into the smart card memory one or more special offers, coupons (and reward points) that are based on the current transaction. For example, if a user is purchasing dog food, the POS terminal may upload dog food coupons to the smart card. These coupons may be good for the next visit with the merchant, or they may optionally instantly redeemable if desired).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add computer further configured to communicate with a second computer and to transfer to said second computer said rebate-claim-information and wherein said transfer occurs substantially contemporaneous with the purchase; a manufacturer's rebate applies solely as a result of purchase of the product; wherein said rebate-claim-status information is one of real-time information or near real-time information to the system of Wodka et al. in order to provide the customer with real-time rebates at the time of purchase vs mail-ins.

As per claims 2, 28 Wodka et al. discloses the electronic tag device is an RFID smart tag (see paragraph [0011]).

As per claims 3, 29 Wodka et al. discloses the electronic reading device is an RFID STR device (see paragraphs [0026, 0027]).

As per claim 4,

Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose a customer interface configured with said first computer to receive and communicate said rebate-claim-status information to the customer.

However, Litwin discloses a customer interface configured with said first computer to receive and communicate said rebate-claim-status information to the customer (see FIGS. 2, 5).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add a customer interface configured with said first computer to receive and communicate said rebate-claim-status information to the customer to the system of Wodka et al. in order to effectively manage the incentive system.

As per claim 6, Wodka et al. discloses product-identification-information comprises at least one member from the group consisting of: (a) product model number; (b) product serial number; (c) rebate promotion code; (d) product name; (e) identification code; (f) proof-of-purchase code; and (g) an electronic address (see paragraph [0028]).

As per claims 7, 33 Wodka does not explicitly disclose rebate-claim-information comprises at least one member from the group consisting of:
(a) customer name; (b) customer's financial institution tracking number; (c) customer's account number at customer's financial institution; (d) customer's mailing address; (e) customer's e-mail address; (f) customer's phone number; (g) customer's credit card number; (h) customer's debit card number; (i) a pin code; (j) an authorization code; (k) customer's electronic signature; (l) product model number; (m) product serial number; (n) rebate promotion code; (o) product name; (p) an electronic address; (q) proof-of-purchase code; (r) date of purchase; (s) time of purchase; (t) product identification code;

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(u) product information; (v) retailer name; (w) retailer location; (x) retailer identification code; and (y) transaction code.

However, Postrel discloses rebate claim information comprises at least one member from the group consisting of:

(a) customer name; (b) customer's financial institution tracking number; (c) customer's account number at customer's financial institution; (d) customer's mailing address; (e) customer's e-mail address; (f) customer's phone number; (g) customer's credit card number; (h) customer's debit card number; (i) a pin code; (j) an authorization code; (k) customer's electronic signature; (l) product model number; (m) product serial number; (n) rebate promotion code; (o) product name; (p) an electronic address; (q) proof-of-purchase code; (r) date of purchase; (s) time of purchase; (t) product identification code; (u) product information; (v) retailer name; (w) retailer location; (x) retailer identification code; and (y) transaction code (see Postrel via para. [0067] The smart card may be utilized in a real-time interactive transaction between a user and a merchant at the point of sale. When a user presents the smart card to the POS terminal at the merchant, the terminal accesses the memory and/or firmware of the smart card and can execute one or more of several types of real-time transactions. The POS terminal may upload into the smart card memory one or more special offers, coupons (and reward points) that are based on the current transaction. For example, if a user is purchasing dog food, the POS terminal may upload dog food coupons to the smart card. These coupons may be good for the next visit with the merchant, or they may optionally instantly redeemable if desired).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add rebate claim consisting of accounts to the system of Wodka et al. in order to allow for direct transfers to customers accounts.

As per claim 9, Wodka et al does not explicitly disclose
a first computer is further configured to generate at least one of (a) rebate status documentation comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said rebate status documentation is given to the customer at the point of sale and (b) a receipt comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said receipt is given to the customer at the point of sale.

However, Postrel discloses

a first computer is further configured to generate at least one of (a) rebate status documentation comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said rebate status documentation is given to the customer at the point of sale and (b) a receipt comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said receipt is given to the customer at the point of sale (see Postrel on real-time uploading and redemption of rebates via para. [0067] The smart card may be utilized in a real-time interactive transaction between a user and a merchant at the point of sale. When a user presents the smart card to the POS terminal at the merchant, the terminal accesses the memory and/or firmware of the smart card and can execute one or more of several types of real-time transactions. The POS terminal may upload into the smart card memory one or more special offers, coupons (and reward points) that are based on the current transaction. For example, if a user is purchasing dog food, the POS terminal

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may upload dog food coupons to the smart card. These coupons may be good for the next visit with the merchant, or they may optionally instantly redeemable if desired).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add a first computer is further configured to generate at least one of (a) rebate status documentation comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said rebate status documentation is given to the customer at the point of sale and (b) a receipt comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said receipt is given to the customer at the point of sale to the system of Wodka et al. in order to provide customers with a record of the rebate.

As per claims 11, 30 Wodka et al. discloses that a first computer is a retailer central computer (see FIG. 4).

As per claims 12, 31 Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose said second computer is one of (a) a manufacturer central computer and (b) a rebate processing center central computer.

However, Postrel discloses said second computer is one of (a) a manufacturer central computer and (b) a rebate processing center central computer (FIGS. 4, 5).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add said second computer is one of (a) a manufacturer central computer and (b) a rebate processing center central computer to the system of Wodka et al. in order to effectively manage the incentive system.

As per Claim 27:

Wodka et al. discloses a method performed by a computer system having a processor for electronically making a claim for a manufacturer's rebate that is provided by a manufacturer upon purchase of a product, said method comprising:

receiving from an electronic reading device product-information stored in an electronic tag physically connected with a purchased product at a point of sale of the product, the product-information indicating product-identification-information;

acquiring rebate-claim-information for making a claim for the manufacturer's rebate available to a customer solely for purchase of the product using at least part of said product- identification-information (see paragraphs [0017, 0021, 0029], FIG. 5 and claims 9, and 11).

Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose initiating a data transfer of said rebate-claim-information to a second computer; and

receiving rebate-claim-status information from said second computer

after said second computer has processed and validated the rebate claim with said rebate-claim-information, wherein said rebate-claim-status information is one of real-time information or near real-time information, communicating said rebate-claim-status information at the point of sale.

However, Quinlan et al. discloses initiating a data transfer of said rebate-claim-information to a second computer; and

receiving rebate-claim-status information from said second computer

after said second computer has processed and validated the rebate claim with said rebate-claim-information (see FIG. 3 and paragraph [0016] via validate the rebate).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add a manufacturer's rebate applies solely as a result of purchase of the product to the system of Wodka et al. in order to provide the customer with discounts at the time of purchase.

Postrel further discloses

rebate-claim-status information is one of real-time information or near real-time information, communicating said rebate-claim-status information at the point of sale (see Postrel on real-time uploading and redemption of rebates via para. [0067] The smart card may be utilized in a real-time interactive transaction between a user and a merchant at the point of sale. When a user presents the smart card to the POS terminal at the merchant, the terminal accesses the memory and/or firmware of the smart card and can execute one or more of several types of real-time transactions. The POS terminal may upload into the smart card memory one or more special offers, coupons (and reward points) that are based on the current transaction. For example, if a user is purchasing dog food, the POS terminal may upload dog food coupons to the smart card. These coupons may be good for the next visit with the merchant, or they may optionally instantly redeemable if desired).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add rebate-claim-status information is one of real-time information or near real-time information, communicating said rebate-claim-status

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information at the point of sale to the system of Wodka et al. in order to provide the customer with real-time rebates at the time of purchase vs mail-ins.

As per claims 36,

Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose a rebate claim comprising generating at least one of (a) rebate status documentation comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said rebate status documentation is given to the customer at the point of sale and (b) a receipt comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said receipt is given to the customer at the point of sale.

However Algiene discloses a first computer is further configured to generate at least one of (a) rebate status documentation comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said rebate status documentation is given to the customer at the point of sale and (b) a receipt comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said receipt is given to the customer at the point of sale (see paragraph [0026] via status of rebate or printed on receipt).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add a receipt comprising at least part of said rebate status information wherein said receipt is given to the customer at the point of sale to the system of Wodka et al. in order to provide customers with a record of the rebate.

As per Claim 66:

Wodka et al. discloses a system for electronically making a claim for a manufacturer's rebate that is provided by a manufacturer upon purchase of a product, comprising:

means for receiving from an electronic reading device product-information stored in an electronic tag physically connected with a purchased product at a point of sale of the product, the product-information indicating product- identification-information (see paragraphs [0017, 0021, 0029], FIG. 5 and claims 9, and 11).

Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose means for acquiring rebate-claim-information for making a claim for the manufacturer's rebate available to a customer solely for purchase of the product using at least part of said product-identification-information;

means for initiating a data transfer of said rebate-claim-information to a second computer;

means for receiving rebate-claim-status information from said second computer after said second computer has processed and validated said rebate claim with said rebate-claim-information, wherein said rebate-claim-status information comprises one of real-time information or near real-time information; and

means for communicating said rebate-claim-status information at the point of sale.

However, Quinlan et al. discloses means for acquiring rebate-claim-information for making a claim for the manufacturer's rebate available to a customer solely for purchase of the product using at least part of said product-identification-information;

means for initiating a data transfer of said rebate-claim-information to a second computer (see FIG. 3 and paragraph [0016] via validate the rebate).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at

the time the invention was made to add means for acquiring rebate-claim-information for making a claim for the manufacturer's rebate available to a customer solely for purchase of the product using at least part of said product-identification-information; means for initiating a data transfer of said rebate-claim-information to a second computer to the system of Wodka et al. in order to provide the customer with discounts at the time of purchase.

Postrel further discloses

means for receiving rebate-claim-status information from said second computer after said second computer has processed and validated said rebate claim with said rebate-claim-information, wherein said rebate-claim-status information comprises one of real-time information or near real-time information; and

means for communicating said rebate-claim-status information at the point of sale (see Postrel on real-time uploading and redemption of rebates via para. [0067] The smart card may be utilized in a real-time interactive transaction between a user and a merchant at the point of sale. When a user presents the smart card to the POS terminal at the merchant, the terminal accesses the memory and/or firmware of the smart card and can execute one or more of several types of real-time transactions. The POS terminal may upload into the smart card memory one or more special offers, coupons (and reward points) that are based on the current transaction. For example, if a user is purchasing dog food, the POS terminal may upload dog food coupons to the smart card. These coupons may be good for the next visit with the merchant, or they may optionally instantly redeemable if desired).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add rebate-claim-status information is one of real-time information or near real-time information, communicating said rebate-claim-status information at the point of sale to the system of Wodka et al. in order to provide the customer with real-time rebates at the time of purchase vs mail-ins.

As per Claim 67:

Wodka et al. discloses a computer-readable storage medium storing computer-executable instructions, comprising:

instructions for receiving from an electronic reading device product-information stored in an electronic tag physically connected with a purchased product at a point of sale of the product, the product-information indicating product-identification-information (see paragraphs [0017, 0021, 0029], FIG. 5 and claims 9, and 11).

Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose instructions for acquiring rebate-claim-information for making a claim for the manufacturer's rebate available to the customer solely for purchase of the product using at least part of said product-identification-information;

instructions for initiating a data transfer of said rebate-claim-information to a second computer;

instructions for receiving rebate-claim-status information from said second computer after said second computer has processed and validated said rebate claim with said rebate-claim-information, wherein said rebate-claim-status information comprises one of real-time information or near real-time information; and

instructions for communicating said rebate-claim-status information at the point of sale.

However, Quinlan et al. discloses instructions for acquiring rebate-claim-information for making a claim for the manufacturer's rebate available to the customer solely for purchase of the product using at least part of said product-identification-information;

instructions for initiating a data transfer of said rebate-claim-information to a second computer (see FIG. 3 and paragraph [0016] via validate the rebate).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add instructions for acquiring rebate-claim-information for making a claim for the manufacturer's rebate available to the customer solely for purchase of the product using at least part of said product-identification-information; instructions for initiating a data transfer of said rebate-claim-information to a second computer to the system of Wodka et al. in order to provide the customer with discounts at the time of purchase.

Postrel further discloses

instructions for receiving rebate-claim-status information from said second computer after said second computer has processed and validated said rebate claim with said rebate-claim-information, wherein said rebate-claim- status information comprises one of real-time information or near real-time information; and

instructions for communicating said rebate-claim-status information at the point of sale (see Postrel on real-time uploading and redemption of rebates via para. [0067] The

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smart card may be utilized in a real-time interactive transaction between a user and a merchant at the point of sale. When a user presents the smart card to the POS terminal at the merchant, the terminal accesses the memory and/or firmware of the smart card and can execute one or more of several types of real-time transactions. The POS terminal may upload into the smart card memory one or more special offers, coupons (and reward points) that are based on the current transaction. For example, if a user is purchasing dog food, the POS terminal may upload dog food coupons to the smart card. These coupons may be good for the next visit with the merchant, or they may optionally instantly redeemable if desired).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add rebate-claim-status information is one of real-time information or near real-time information, communicating said rebate-claim-status information at the point of sale to the system of Wodka et al. in order to provide the customer with real-time rebates at the time of purchase vs mail-ins.

4. Claims 10, and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wodka et al. (US 2003/0171984), in view of Quinlan et. al. (US 20040215514), in view of Postrel (US 20050021400), and further in view of Packes, Jr. et al. (US 7,006,983).

As per claims 10, 35 Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose rebate status information comprises at least one member from the group consisting of: (a) rebate claim accepted notice; (b) rebate claim denied notice; (c) rebate claim denied

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code; (d) rebate claim reference code; (e) EFT transaction code; (g) e-mail notice; and (h) rebate check number.

However Packes Jr, et al. discloses rebate status information comprises at least one member from the group consisting of: (a) rebate claim accepted notice; (b) rebate claim denied notice; (c) rebate claim denied code; (d) rebate claim reference code; (e) EFT transaction code; (g) e-mail notice; and (h) rebate check number (see col 15, lines 59-67).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add notification to the system of Wodka et al. in order to keep customers informed of rebate status.

5. Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wodka et al. (US 2003/0171984), in view of Quinlan et. al. (US 20040215514), in view of Postrel (US 20050021400), and further in view of Nguyen (US 2003/0220839).

As per claim 22, Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose a second remote computer is a portable customer computer in communication with at least one of said first computer and said first remote computer via a wireless communication connection.

However Nguyen discloses a second remote computer is a portable customer computer in communication with at least one of said first computer and said first remote computer via a wireless communication connection (see paragraph [0036] and FIG. 2).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at

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the time the invention was made to add a second remote computer is a portable customer computer in communication with at least one of said first computer and said first remote computer via a wireless communication connection to the system of Wodka et al. in order to promote wireless transactions.

6. Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wodka et al. (US 2003/0171984), in view of Quinlan et. al. (US 20040215514), in view of Postrel (US 20050021400), and further in view of McCarthy (US 5,202,826).

As per claim 24, Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose that a first computer is further configured to initiate an electronic fund transfer from a first bank account into a second bank account in the amount of the rebate.

However McCarthy discloses an electronic consumer rebate having a first computer configured to initiate an electronic fund transfer from a first bank account into a second bank account in the amount of the rebate (see Column 2, lines 1-30).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add a first computer is further configured to initiate an electronic fund transfer from a first bank account into a second bank account in the amount of the rebate to the system of Wodka et al. in order to allow customers to have their cash incentives deposit to their bank accounts.

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7. Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wodka et al. (US 2003/0171984), in view of Quinlan et. al. (US 20040215514), in view of Postrel (US 20050021400), and further in view of Scroggie et al. (US 6,185,541).

As per claims 26, Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose said first or second computer is configured to transmit an electronic mail message to a predefined electronic mail address wherein said electronic mail message contains at least part of said rebate-claim-status information.

However Scroggie et al. discloses said first or second computer is configured to transmit an electronic mail message to a predefined electronic mail address wherein said electronic mail message contains at least part of said rebate-claim-status information (See Abstract).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add said first or second computer is configured to transmit an electronic mail message to a predefined electronic mail address wherein said electronic mail message contains at least part of said rebate-claim-status information to the system of Wodka et al. in order to promote communication with customers electronically.

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8. Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wodka et al. (US 2003/0171984), in view of Quinlan et. al. (US 20040215514), in view of Postrel (US 20050021400), and further in view of Lane al. (US 7,221,258).

As per claim 32, Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose product-identification-information

comprises at least one member from the group consisting of: (a) product model number; (b) product serial number; (c) rebate promotion code; (d) product name; (e) identification code; (f) proof-of-purchase code; and (g) an electronic address; and (f) a URL link.

However Lane et al. discloses product-identification-information comprises at least one member from the group consisting of: (a) product model number; (b) product serial number; (c) rebate promotion code; (d) product name; (e) identification code; (f) proof-of-purchase code; and (g) an electronic address; and (f) a URL link (see col 3, lines 50-60).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add identification code to the system of Wodka et al. in order to promote ease of management of the product that are part of the rebate marketing campaign.

9. Claims 68, 72, and 73 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wodka et al. (US 2003/0171984), in view of Nguyen (US 2003/0220839), and further in view of Banerjee et al. (US 2003/0130890).

As per claim 68:

Wodka et al. discloses a method performed by a computer system having a processor, comprising:

determining by the computer system that a consumer is interested in a product (see paragraph [0035, 0036] via item of interest to the consumer).

Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose transmitting to a second computer associated with a representative of a manufacturer of the product an identification of the product; receiving from the second computer a first rebate for the product;

transmitting to a third computer information indicative of the product, a first price for the product wherein the first price accounts for the first rebate, and a second price wherein the second price is a price for a competitor's product, wherein the third computer is associated with a representative of a manufacturer of a competitive product; and receiving from the third computer a second rebate for the competitor's product.

However Nguyen discloses

transmitting to a second computer associated with a representative of a manufacturer of the product an identification of the product; receiving from the second computer a first rebate for the product

(see Nguyen FIG. 1 and para. [0033] via the consumer may request a rebate from the discount purchase service or directly from the manufacturer. The rebates are obtained through a recognition step using either the wireless communication device of the consumer, or an identification or smart card. This communication preferably includes a pictorial representation of a printed coupon showing the item price and discount thereon. .. Such pictorial representations may be displayed on the wireless communication device so that the consumer sees the discount coupon in its customary form as it might appear as a printed paper coupon (see FIG. 3C). Alternately, the information may be placed in a smart (memory on board) card via Internet communications to a card reader/writer. .. At the point of purchase, the consumer transmits a service identification code, item specification, price and discount information which corresponds to the selected coupon, and may be done via wireless or wire interconnection with a high degree of automation. Also, as shown in FIG. 2 a smart type card may be scanned to pick-up this information).

Banerjee further discloses

transmitting to a third computer information indicative of the product, a first price for the product wherein the first price accounts for the first rebate, and a second price wherein the second price is a price for a competitor's product, wherein the third computer is associated with a representative of a manufacturer of a competitive product; and receiving from the third computer a second rebate for the competitor's product

(see FIG. 1, 3 and 4 and para. [0007] the invention provides a method of resetting the value of a coupon (as a result of assessing competitors). .. The retailer may be the manufacturer and [0023] via Field 16 "Competitor #2 coupon value" 56 may contain the discount coupon value for the comparable product from the second closest competitor).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add transmitting to a second computer an identification of the product; receiving from the second computer a first rebate for the product; transmitting to a third computer information indicative of the product, a first price for the product wherein the first price accounts for the first rebate, and a second price wherein the second price is a price for a competitor's product; and receiving from the third computer a second rebate for the competitor's product to the system of Wodka et al. in order to ensure consumers get the benefit of the lowest price.

As per claim 72:

Wodka et al. discloses the determining includes identifying the product based on an electronic tag (see paragraph [0035] and FIG. 5 via tag being read by RFID reader).

As per claim 73:

Wodka et al. discloses the electronic tag is an RFID tag (see paragraph [0035] and FIG. 5 via tag being read by RFID reader).

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10. Claims 70, and 71 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wodka et al. (US 2003/0171984), Nguyen (US 2003/0220839), in view of Banerjee et al. (US 20030130890), and further in view of Treyz et al. (US 6587835).

As per claim 70:

Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose transmitting to the second computer a second price and receiving from the second computer a third rebate for the product.

However, Treyz et. al. discloses transmitting to the second computer a second price and receiving from the second computer a third rebate for the product (see col 14, lines 57-67 via seller matching the lowest price of competitors (other sellers)).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add transmitting to the second computer a second price and receiving from the second computer a third rebate for the product to the system of Wodka et al. in order to ensure consumers purchase a seller's product.

As per claim 71:

Wodka et al. does not explicitly disclose a sum of the first price and the third rebate is less than or equal to a sum of the second price and the second rebate.

However, Treyz et. al. discloses a sum of the first price and the third rebate is less than or equal to a sum of the second price and the second rebate (see col 14, lines 57-67 via seller matching the lowest price of competitors (other sellers)).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at

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the time the invention was made to add a sum of the first price and the third rebate is less than or equal to a sum of the second price and the second rebate to the system of Wodka et al. in order to ensure consumers purchase a seller's product.

Response to Arguments

11. The applicant's arguments are moot in light of the new grounds of rejection above.

Conclusion

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rodney M. Henry whose telephone number is 571-270-5102. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 7:30am to 6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eric Stamber can be reached on 571-272-6724. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-270-6102.

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RMH

/Arthur Duran/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3622